

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LLOYD SMUCKER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 181; YEA on Roll Call No. 182; and YEA on Roll Call No. 183.

CHRISTOPHER D'URSO: AN EXTRAORDINARY RHODES SCHOLAR

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Christopher D'Urso, a senior at the University of Pennsylvania from Colts Neck, NJ, in my district, who was one of only 32 candidates nationwide selected as a 2018 Rhodes Scholar, for a three-year doctoral program at Oxford University.

Christopher graduated from the University of Pennsylvania this week with a Master's of Public Administration (MPA) and a Certificate in Politics through Penn's Fels Institute of Government—the youngest student to graduate the university with an MPA. He also earned a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations, and was named Valedictorian of the International Relations Senior Class of 2018, with a 4.0 GPA.

This fall, Christopher will begin pursuing a doctorate in Public Policy at Oxford's renowned Blavatnik School of Government as one of only five full-time students worldwide selected to enroll in this program.

Rhodes Scholarships honor young men and women not only for their achievements, but “for their character, commitment to others and to the common good, and for their potential for leadership in whatever domains their careers may lead.”

Christopher most certainly meets these high standards, as I have seen first-hand his keen intellect, passion for public service, outstanding leadership qualities and commitment to excellence. From 2013 to 2014, he interned in my district office where he assisted our staff with casework matters by helping provide valuable information from government agencies.

As a high school student, his research on loopholes in U.S. country-of-origin labeling laws that pose risks to consumer safety was so well-conducted that in 2014, he testified before the China Commission alongside officials from the USDA and the FDA in a hearing on concerns over food exports from China. He also produced a report with legislative recommendations on the issue.

I know that consumer safety and public service are important issues for Christopher—while at Penn, he founded Penn CASE, a student-led consumer assistance outreach program for local residents. Christopher also worked for the Monmouth County Department of Consumer Affairs for three years, investigating 70 consumer complaints—many of them related to Hurricane Sandy—and helping return over \$114,000 to local citizens.

His senior project, a report on “Translating Justice: An Evaluation of U.S. Efforts to Sup-

port Criminal Procedure Reform in Panama,” was borne out of his recent trip to Panama as part of his MP A capstone project; he interviewed Panamanian and U.S. officials on the country's criminal justice system and evaluated U.S. programs created to help reform the system. Christopher won Penn's Rose Undergraduate Research Award for his work, and he will share his evaluation and recommendations with the U.S. Department of Justice, the State Department, and the Panamanian Embassy.

As Christopher graduates and prepares to attend Oxford in the fall, I wish him all the best in this exciting new step in his life.

TRIBUTE TO MS. ELISA IRENE
DeLARGE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor my constituent, Ms. Elisa Irene DeLarge, on her graduation from high school and her matriculation to college.

Ms. DeLarge is a soon-to-be graduate of William W. Bodine High School, where she earned a 3.7GPA over four years. Her success in academics is a testament to her hard work, tireless work ethic and devotion to her future. Ms. DeLarge's will continue her academic career by taking courses at The Community College of Philadelphia this summer and attending The University of Michigan this Fall.

In addition to her own academic success, Ms. DeLarge is also committed to aiding future graduates of Philadelphia schools. Ms. DeLarge devotes countless hours to tutoring elementary and middle school students at the Narcissa S. Cruz Recreation Center. This act of selfless mentorship further speaks to Ms. DeLarge's work ethic and morals.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Ms. DeLarge today.

A TRAGIC DAY FOR PALESTINIAN
RIGHTS AND AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, Monday's events in Jerusalem and Gaza will long be remembered as the day the U.S. formally abandoned its role as mediator and peacemaker in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. The Trump administration's decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem was a grave departure from internationally recognized norms regarding the final status of Jerusalem. Monday's opening ceremony of the new U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem will prove to be a historic mistake that will haunt future U.S. presidents long after Donald Trump has departed the White House.

The ceremony marking the Embassy's opening was made for television, as well as the right-wing voters in America and Israel the policy was intended to appeal to. The prospects of peace were discarded and no consid-

eration was given to the existence of millions of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation or the fact that just miles away from the new Embassy more than 60 Palestinian protesters were being killed by Israeli snipers. The extremist, homophobic, and racist televangelists—John Hagee and Robert Jeffress—were invited by the Trump administration to offer prayers on behalf of the America people at the ceremony. Their presence and prominent roles can only be described as an insult to American and Christian values.

Israel is a nation that enjoys security and military superiority largely as a result of the generosity of American taxpayers. The rights and freedoms enjoyed by Jewish citizens of Israel are not enjoyed by non-Jews who suffer discrimination as second-class citizens. For the millions of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation there are no human rights, only repression, violence; and the constant pressure of having their land, water, and dignity taken from them.

I believe in the critical role of the U.S. as a global leader for advancing human rights and justice. It should infuriate and illicit outrage among Americans to witness the Trump administration abandoning such leadership in exchange for a payback on political debts to right-wing special interest groups. For the Israelis and Palestinians who still believe that diplomacy, dialogue, and reducing conflict are the only path to peace, I will state clearly that the Trump administration cannot and must not be trusted with the future of your children or your countries.

I include in the RECORD a column by Michelle Goldbert from the New York Times entitled A Grotesque Spectacle in Jerusalem that outlines the day that destroyed U.S. leadership in the Middle East. The more than sixty Palestinian protesters who were killed by Israeli snipers and soldiers have been buried. Their families and friends grieve. For Americans who believe the U.S. is a force to advance human rights, equality, and justice, we also grieve because Monday's spectacle in Jerusalem placed the U.S. on the side of oppression and repression of a people seeking basic human rights, freedom and self-determination. It was a truly grotesque spectacle.

[From the New York Times: May 14, 2018]

(By Michelle Goldberg)

A GROTESQUE SPECTACLE IN JERUSALEM

On Monday, Ivanka Trump, Jared Kushner and other leading lights of the Trumpist right gathered in Israel to celebrate the relocation of the American Embassy to Jerusalem, a gesture widely seen as a slap in the face to Palestinians who envision East Jerusalem as their future capital.

The event was grotesque. It was a summation of the cynical alliance between hawkish Jews and Zionist evangelicals who believe that the return of Jews to Israel will usher in the apocalypse and the return of Christ, after which Jews who don't convert will burn forever.

Religions like “Mormonism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism” lead people “to an eternity of separation from God in Hell,” Robert Jeffress, a Dallas megachurch pastor, once said. He was chosen to give the opening prayer at the embassy ceremony. John Hagee, one of America's most prominent end-times preachers, once said that Hitler was sent by God to drive the Jews to their ancestral homeland. He gave the closing benediction.

This spectacle, geared toward Donald Trump's Christian American base, coincided